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That such was their mind is clear from the subsequent passages, where they prove, enforce, and limit the exact effect of this "prohibitory part of the precept." No effort of reason, without revelation, could know, with certainty, that it is forbidden to show our honour for the true God by raising statues in his name; to man it would seem but a fitting and just tribute to his sacred majesty. If it was thought necessary that the finger of God should write on the tables of stone the injunction not to take his name in vain—which our ideas of the respect due to his awful attributes might have led us to think superfluous—how shall we venture to omit, as unimportant, the fourth verse, which guards us against a sin into which our reason and nature would rather lead us than serve as any natural protection?

It seems an irresistible conclusion, that the Roman Catholic Church has decided it to be, at least, a distinct and important part of a precept of the Deity, and, though they do not adopt our interpretation, they give it sufficient importance to make its omission, by individual priests and teachers, an unwarrantable breach of their doctrine, as it certainly appears a violation of the frequent injunction applied to these very verses—"Thou shalt not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it."†

As to the fact that this omission is common and usual, it is only necessary to ask for any of the cheap catechisms, in ordinary use among the masses, to be satisfied that the practice of the generality of priests has ventured to differ from the declared theory of their church. I am not aware of any catechism in Italian that gives this fourth verse, for the translation of the Trent Catechism is not in use among the laity. German catechisms, of very large size, omit it also; and in France the commandments are usually taught in couplets, of which the following are the first:—

- "1. Un seul Dieu tu adoreras, et aimeras parfaitement.
2. Dieu envain tu ne jureras, ni autre chose pareillement."

The only Irish one that I have seen with a translation makes the same omission;‡ and there are abundance in the English that follow the example. Is it surprising that Protestants give an unfavourable construction to so general a suppression, and is it not strange that Roman Catholics will not refer to the true standards of their faith, instead of allowing such perversions of their own doctrines?

FONTIUM PETITOR.

#### IDOLATRY AMONG THE HINDOOS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—The anecdote, told in your paper for November, of the reply of a Tinnevely Hindoo gentleman to a Roman Catholic priest, forcibly reminded me of a question which I often asked myself, many years ago, when I first went to India—viz., "What is idolatry?" that sin so universally denounced in the Bible. This question was suggested by the fact, that while idols were conspicuous in every Hindoo temple, and "under every green tree" by the road side, and while the Bramins themselves were to be seen prostrated before them, they all, when questioned, declared they did not worship idols, but that they bowed down before them as the representatives of the absent deities, to whom, in reality, their homage was addressed.

This reply of the Bramins, connected with the fact that the idolatry of Hindoos is considered in Europe an admitted fact, led me to examine the account given in the 32nd chapter of Exodus, of the first great apostasy of the Jewish nation, when they made the golden calf; and there I was struck with the expression, in verse 5, "to-morrow is a feast to Jehovah." The golden calf was, therefore, no new god, but intended as the representative of the Holy One, who had "brought them out of the land of Egypt;" for, in the 8th verse, this power is attributed to their idol, though, as the people themselves well knew, that idol was not in existence, as an idol, when their deliverance from Egypt took place; they could not, therefore, have imagined that this calf had brought them out of Egypt. The nation were hardly so besotted as to think that; but they held it to be the visible representation of that power which had delivered them from Egyptian bondage.

The belief held by many, that the calf was supposed to be a god distinct from the true, as Baal or Moloch, and that the Israelites, in making it, had determined to change the supreme object of their worship, may have arisen from the expression, in the first verse, "make us gods;" and that in the fourth verse, "these be thy gods;" but the word translated "gods" in both these passages is the same—אלהים—mentioned in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis as the Creator of heaven and earth; and it is with reference to this plural noun that Aaron, in the fourth verse, uses the plural pronoun "these," which would evidently be inapplicable to the single object (the calf) to which he was pointing.

The gross, material worship of a lifeless idol (such as Europeans, who have not lived in an idolatrous country, suppose to exist there) is rarely acknowledged, except

by the poorest and most ignorant classes of the people. The Bramins, to a man, repudiate anything so senseless, and even the lower classes are ashamed often to acknowledge it; while, at the same time, their dread of and reverence for their idols discovers itself on many occasions. Nor need this be a matter of surprise; for acts of power, motion, and knowledge are often attributed to these lifeless blocks, which, if true, would naturally obtain for them the greatest reverence. Thus, on one occasion, in a Bramin's house, in the town of Hoobly, in Western India, an earthen image was produced, very slowly and gradually. First a foot appeared (this was shown to the astonished populace, by the Bramin, as what had occurred during the previous night, while he slept); after a few days, another foot was found beside it; and gradually legs grew on these; and, in the course of months, a perfect image of Vishnu appeared—self-created. Can we wonder if the populace worshipped such an image?

Europeans generally receive these and similar tales with such undisguised derision, that Hindoos seldom venture to tell them the stories which are current among themselves of miraculous cures performed by images, and of the acts of locomotion and supernatural power which are attributed to most of the idols throughout India; but these, remarkable as they are, are fully equalled by the tales generally current of Christian images in Papal Europe. To say nothing of ancient stories, that of the image of the Virgin Mary, at Rimini, in Italy (referred to in a former number of your paper), which moves its eyes (commonly called the winking image), is a matter of the present time. I have heard that this story was strongly reprobated by M. de Sibour, the Archbishop of Paris, as injurious to religion, and calculated to bring it into contempt. Whether the Pope is otherwise minded, or whether he has favoured the world with his infallible opinion, or decided that the miracle was true, perhaps some of your readers may be able to say. In the town of Tournay, in Belgium, there is, in one of the churches, an image of the Blessed Virgin, whose face is quite black. So unusual an appearance excited the curiosity of a gentleman of our party who was looking at the church, and he asked the sextoness the cause. She replied, that on one memorable occasion, when Tournay was besieged, that image of the Virgin had advanced to the ramparts, and, by catching the balls of the besiegers in her apron, had saved the town; but that the powder of the cannon had blackened her face as we saw it. The visit to Tournay which I here narrate occurred many years ago; but I conclude that "the black virgin" is there still. For the story which the sextoness told the priests would not be responsible; but for the state of the image they surely are, as it must have been coloured by their permission: and when images perform such prodigies of valour, who can blame the people for worshipping them?

The charge of idolatry was one brought against the Romish Church, at a very early period, by Mahomed and his followers; and the contempt which they exhibited towards the cross was solely as an object of worship. They believed, too, that the Blessed Virgin was the third person of the Trinity; and though this was evidently an error, even in the corruptest ages of the church, yet it shows Mahomedans considered that she received Divine honours from the Christians with whom they came in contact.

A friend of mine in India had a Mahomedan servant, with whom he used to converse freely on religious matters. This man once classed the prevailing religious systems of India as follows:—"The Hindoos and the Portuguese worship images; the English and the Mahomedans worship God."

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

A RETIRED EAST INDIAN.

Nov. 27, 1852.

#### FARM OPERATIONS FOR DECEMBER.

(From the Irish Farmer's Gazette.)

**Wheat.**—We should hope that the greater portion of the seed wheat has been committed to the ground long ere this. Where that has not been the case, no exertion should be spared in doing so without delay; in no case should it be deferred till after Christmas, as after that period it will be getting late to sow any of the winter varieties.

**Beans and Peas** may still be sown; the best variety of bean to sow now is, the Russian, or the Heligoland, for the feeding of stock; the best for human consumption are, the early Mazagan and long pod.

**Peas** chiefly used in feeding stock are, the gray maple, Pennsylvanian, and strawberry; for human food, the early Charleston, early Hotspur, double-blossomed May and marrow-fat peas are best.

**Storing Roots.**—Take every advantage of dry weather, in pulling and storing Swedish and Aberdeen turnips, mangels, parsnips, and carrots, before they encounter severe frosts. Roots, particularly turnips and mangels, intended for late keeping, are much more injured by frosts than most people imagine; for, although no injury is perceptible to the eye, their keeping properties are much injured when exposed to severe frosts. The

site chosen for their storing should be cool and dry, and the best aspect is that facing the north, as, when much exposed to the east or south, early sprouting is the consequence; whereas, if the northern sides of walls, ditches, or plantations are chosen, their sprouting or vegetating is prevented, as long as it is possible, next season. Roots intended for storing till a late period should be taken up very carefully, and the leaves wrenched off by the hand; the crowns will thus remain uninjured, which will be scarcely possible if those employed to trim them are allowed to do so with a sharp-cutting instrument. The tap-roots should not be cut off, neither should the outer bark or skin of the roots be cut or bruised; the roots may be packed on the ground in longitudinal heaps, about six feet wide at the base, and tapering up, about six feet high, to a single root at top. It will be of much service if some branches of brushwood are placed in layers through the roots; they will prevent them slipping and tumbling down, which, without this contrivance, is a fertile source of annoyance. Parsnips and carrots will be much benefited by being packed in pit or river sand. After the roots are packed as above described, they should be well thatched. Roots may also be packed in cool, dry sheds or cellars, and in caves or pits, where the subsoil is dry. Stored as above, any of these roots will keep till an incredibly long period in the spring.

**Milk cows** should be kept closely in the house, with the exception of about an hour for exercise, during which time their byres should be made clean and comfortable; their food should be generous, for which they will amply pay. Alternate feeds of cooked and raw food are much the best—the cooked in the morning and at night, the raw at mid-day. Cattle thus taken care of are much more profitable than leaving them starving and shivering at the backs of ditches, or poaching the land, in fruitless endeavours to pick up a sufficiency of food, to say nothing of the inhumanity of the system.

**Young stock** should also be well and carefully housed and fed; they require an abundant supply of nourishing food—as much, or more so, than those full-grown—to be profitable to their owners; it is a ruinous system to keep stock on cold, bleak pastures; and the improving farmer who has once shaken off the sloth and indifference which too often characterize the generality of our brethren, and put his stock on better and more careful keep, finds—in their altered appearance, and the prices obtained at the early summer fairs—so amply remunerated, that he will hardly be tempted to return to old habits.

**Pigs.**—There is no description of stock to which cleanliness, warmth, and good keep are more essential at this season than fattening pigs, stores, and breeding sows, more particularly as we are under the impression that pigs, for some time at least, will be the best paying stock. Cooked turnips, cabbages, parsnips, carrots, mangels, with a liberal allowance of pea, bean, oatmeal, or barley-meal, will not be lost on the pigs, but pay a liberal per centage.

**Digging.**—On small farms this is the time to dig all land not under crop; dig deeply and roughly, so as to expose as great a surface as possible to the ameliorating influence of the winter's frosts and thaws. In wet or in drained ground, the land can be dug in ridges, and in dry land it can be dug out without ridges; but in either cases, deeply and roughly, not scratching it in the usual old, slovenly manner. It may remain so until the sowing time, when, if intended for grain, it may be sown and harrowed in without any further preparation. But the mode of digging that we most commend is, to throw up the land as it is dug into high and narrow drills, similar to those made for turnips. This mode can be adopted whether the land is in ridges, or with a plain surface without furrows; the advantages of this method are, that a greater surface is exposed to the frost, snow, and air; it lies so high, that it is quickly dry, and if intended for corn will break down early in the spring in the best possible condition; but if intended for a root crop the advantages are still greater; for if the land is thrown up into drills, 27 or 28 inches asunder, in the spring, there is no more to be done than deposit the manure in the drills as already formed, and split them with the spade, covering the manure from both sides, when the drill is formed again for the reception of the seed, whether parsnips, carrots, mangels, or turnips, &c. Care should be taken in the digging to pick out all scutch-grass and root weeds.

**Odts and Ends.**—Keep draining, digging, subsoiling, and gathering manure, for without a liberal use of manure the draining, &c., will be of little avail; therefore, gather and manufacture manure by every means in your power; let nothing be lost. Remove all crooked, useless and cumbersome fences, and form new ones; cut down, plash, and lay all overgrown fences. Keep the flail, or thrashing-machine, busy, so as to have fresh and clean straw before the cattle. Scour and clean out all open ditches and ponds. Cut and bruise furze, which is an excellent food for horses or cows, when it can be obtained. Repair and paint implements, where required, and let the well-regulated labour of those dependant on him, and a clean comfortable farm-yard, be the careful farmer's pride and pleasure.

\* Dr. Donovan's Translation, page 360. Coyne, Dublin.

Deuter. iv. 2.

† Published by the College of the Sorbonne. Paris, . . .